

Amendments to the Specification:

Page 3, lines 19 – 24

Preferably, the chest encircling band is constructed, at least in part, from a flexible material, more preferably, a stretchable fabric. Preferably the material can stretch up to 200% of its untensioned length, more preferably up to 100%, more preferably up to 50%, most preferably less than 20%, in particular 10% of its untensioned length. In a particularly preferred embodiment, “Millerighe” “Millerighe®” bandage material is used.

Page 4, lines 9 – 12

~~Millerighe~~ Millerighe® comprises a mixture of polyester, polyamide, rubber and cotton and is preferably hypoallergenic. In a particularly preferred embodiment, the ~~Millerighe~~ Millerighe® has a compositional make-up make-up of about 51% polyester, 24% polyamide, 15% rubber, and 10% cotton.

Page 4, lines 13 – 24

The chest encircling band may be continuous or may have attachment means at either end of the band. Preferably, the band comprises two ends having engagement means for securing the band around a patient's chest. The securing means may be in any form of complementary ~~Velcro~~ Velcro® material attached to the ends of the bands, clasps, buckles, buttons, and the like. Preferably the tension of the band is adjustable by the user or care helper by adjusting the basic tension applied to the band when first secured to the body of the user. This is most conveniently effected by having adjustable attachment means at the ends of the band. For example, ~~Velcro~~ Velcro® is particularly advantageous as the initial tension can be altered depending on the degree of overlap of the ends of the band.

Page 5, lines 5 – 13

Advantageously, the post-operative chest support of the present invention is provided with additional bands which may be slung over the shoulders of the user to provide support for the chest encircling band and to secure this in place around the user's body. These shoulder bands shall ~~herein after~~ hereinafter be referred to as braces "braces." These are preferably attached to the front and to the rear of the chest encircling band ~~during wear~~ while being worn. These braces may be permanently or removably attached to the chest encircling band or material associated therewith. The braces may be attached by Velcro Velcro® or securing clips, buttons, clasps, and the like.

Page 6, lines 16 – 27

It is important that the vest is fixed on the chest in a comfortable manner, with minimal inhibition of breathing. The patient (or ~~earer~~ care giver) should arrange the vest around the chest and close it in the exhaling phase, without stretching, but merely closing the vest, for example, by folding complementary ~~Velcro~~ Velcro® over each other to fixate support. This means that when the patient inhales (the thoracic cavity moves up and outwards), the support device gives the patient extra support and the feeling of support needed to feel comfortable in the postoperative period. When coughing or breathing deeply the patient grips the two handles, which are fixed at the front with one or both hands. This means that the patient is in control of the degree of tension applied to the chest assuring the tension to be within the comfortable range for the patient.

Page 7, lines 19 - 29

Figure 1 shows a perspective view of the post-operative chest support of the present invention. The support comprises a chest encircling band 1 constructed of "Millerighe" "Millerighe®" bandage material. The band is shown in a closed position, as it would be worn around the chest of a user. Braces 2 are fixed to the rear of the band and are securely stitched in place. The braces are removably attached towards the front of the band (from the wearer's point of

view) by ~~Velcro~~ Velcro® strips 3. The external surface of the band, i.e. the surface not in contact with the chest of the user, has pockets 4 which are attached to the band 1 and have an opening 5 for the user's hand to enter and grip the handle 6. The handle 6, shown by hash lines, is concealed from general view within the pocket 4.

Page 7, lines 31 – 32 and page 8, lines 1 - 7

Figure 2 shows the post-operative support in an open configuration, i.e. not worn by a patient. The band 1 has two free ends 7 and 8 bearing complimentary ~~Velcro~~ Velcro® strips 9 and 10 for securing the band around the chest of the user. The overlap of the free ends may be adjusted to change the base tension of the band around a patient. The braces are shown in an open configuration. In use, once the band has been secured around the chest of the patient, the braces are brought over the shoulder and the free ends of the braces are brought into engagement with strips of ~~Velcro~~ Velcro® complimentary to those borne on the free ends of the braces.